



Commerce  
Subcabinet  
Guidance Collaboration Action

December 10, 2019  
President's Conference Room West, Miller Office Building  
11 Bladen Street, Annapolis  
11:00 am – 1:00 pm  
Minutes

**Attendees:**

**Cabinet Members:**

Kelly Schulz, Secretary, Department of Commerce, Chair  
Ken Holt, Secretary, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)  
Tiffany Robinson, Secretary, Department of Labor  
Deputy Secretary Horacio Tablada for Ben Grumbles, Secretary, Department of Environment (MDE)  
Robert McCord, Secretary, Department of Planning (MDP)  
Jim Fielder, Secretary, Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC)  
Michael Higgs, Director of Assessments & Taxation (SDAT)  
Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary, Department of Natural Resources (DNR)  
Wendi Peters, Special Secretary, Smart Growth

**Guests:**

Allison Mayer, Office of the Governor  
Ryan Snow, Governor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs (GOIA)  
Gretchen Hardman, GOIA  
Meredith Wimbrow, Office of the Governor  
Rob O'Connor, MDE  
Joe Griffiths, MDP  
Kory Boone, SDAT  
Mike Pantelides, Labor  
Ann Gunning, Labor  
Victor Clark, Labor  
Janice Walker-Emeogo, Labor  
Kory Boone, SDAT  
Isaiah Ellis, MHEC  
Rick Gordon, Governor's Office of Rural Broadband  
Sue Battle-McDonald, MDE

**Staff:**

Deputy Secretary Ben Wu  
Julie Woepke, Department of Commerce  
Kyle McColgan, Department of Commerce  
Jayson Knott, Department of Commerce  
Sarah Sheppard, Department of Commerce

## **I. Call to Order**

Secretary Schulz called the meeting to order at 11:00 am.

## **II. Chair Update**

Secretary Kelly Schulz began her presentation by acknowledging the contributions to the Department by Deputy Secretary Ben Wu and thanking him for his leadership since 2014. As Deputy Secretary, Mr. Wu departs the Department to lead the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation. She stated she looks forward to continued collaborations not only with Commerce but all State Agencies.

Secretary Schulz provided a brief update on the Maryland Marketing Partnership which has grown to 39 partners. The Open for Business banner is prominently seen at Baltimore Ravens games and is being discussed with the Baltimore Orioles next season. Looking forward to 2020, she stated the Department will be focused on accelerating the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem.

Secretary Schulz updated the Subcabinet that her final Collaboration Tours with the local jurisdictions were nearly complete. The last of the tours is scheduled with Baltimore City on December 17, 2019. She stated the tours have been insightful and offer an opportunity for future collaborations.

Secretary Schulz introduced Assistant Secretary Signe Pringle, Business and Industry Development who highlighted several recent attraction and expansion projects resulting in over 200 new jobs. Ms. Pringle then reviewed several pending attraction, expansion and retention announcements, ongoing open opportunities and select new opportunities. She acknowledged that the collaborative approach of the regional teams has supported these projects and expressed her appreciation. (Presentation on file.)

## **III. Review and approval of October 18, 2019 Minutes**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the October 18, 2019 meeting were approved.

## **IV. Subcabinet Workgroups**

### **a. Customer Service**

Mr. Mike Pantelides, Executive Director, Office of Small Business Regulatory Assistance, Department of Labor provided an update on the Governor's Customer Service Initiative and Survey Results. He noted that since 2017, when combining the Governor's Customer Service Survey, the Maryland Business Express Survey and the Surveys after Online Transactions, the overall customer service rating is 87%. He provided an update on select data on several Subcabinet Agencies, announced the availability of providing the Agencies with a graphics license for data display. He reported the Governor's Hero Award which had previously been awarded at the Board of Public Works meetings, will be reinstated and asked Secretaries to submit nominees. Mr. Pantelides reminded the Subcabinet of the availability of the master contract – 19 vendors available for training. (Presentation on file.)

### **b. Workforce Development**

Ms. Sarah Sheppard, Director of Education and Workforce, Department of Commerce reported that she has collaborated with the Department's marketing team who developing a blog post to direct people to the Workforce Expressway. She stated other Agencies are scheduled to submit similar ideas and that she is coordinating with SDAT for webpage updates.

Ms. Sheppard then provided an update on youth apprenticeships which has grown to 64 in the 2019-2020 school year. She stated the number of participating businesses has grown to 140 unduplicated employers, 13 school districts with two (2) additional applications – Caroline and Wicomico Counties recently submitted. Ms. Sheppard reviewed the apprenticeship industries by region and noted the occupations. Secretary Fielder inquired on an Allied Health apprenticeship.

Ms. Ann Marie Gunning, Manager, Office of Workforce, Department of Labor reported that the number of registered apprenticeships is at an all-time high, resulting in the hiring of two (2) new navigators for the 10,000 registered apprenticeships. She provided updates from the Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning and described the assistance provided to displaced workers from the Verso Paper Mill closure. (Presentations on file.)

#### **c. Job Creators**

Deputy Secretary Ben Wu reported the Deputy Secretaries held a conference call on November 8<sup>th</sup> and discussed the additions of a manufacturing prospect in Cumberland and a manufacturing expansion in Cambridge at the Dorchester Tech Park. He stated the Job Creators will continue to be distributed to the Regional Teams for greater utility and collaborations.

#### **d. Small Business**

Mr. Kory Boone, Special Assistant to the Secretary, SDAT, reported the Communications Subcommittee of the Workgroup has refocused efforts on sharing social media content; encouraging the posting of the Maryland Business Express (MBEx) weblink is on each Agency's website; sharing small business news on MBEx; and posting Agency facts sheets on the MBEx. He stated that a request had been submitted to update the Governor's message on the MBEx. Mr. Boone reported updates to the MBEx and the addition of a monthly Small Business Newsletter. He concluded by stating that the Workgroup recommends the Subcabinet Secretaries require all employees who interact with the public be required to complete the MBEx training video located on the HUB. (Presentation on file.)

#### **e. Regional Resources**

Mr. Joe Griffiths, Local Assistance and Training Manager, MDP provided an overview of the progress of the Regional Resources Teams and updates. He directed the Subcabinet to the updates and opportunities reports found in the Secretaries' folders. He then introduced the Team Leaders to present the status of the Team Action Plans.

Mr. Ryan Snow, GOIA, Eastern Shore Team Leader reported on the Region's top Action Plan - the William Preston, Jr. Memorial (Bay) Bridge reconstruction project. He stated updates were recently shared in a meeting with Queen Anne's County officials including that 100% of the milling has been completed and progress is now temperature dependent. He reported that the Governor has directed the acceleration of the project and is pushing the \$30 million National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process.

Mr. Isaiah Ellis of MHEC, Baltimore Metro Team Leader provided any update to the top Action Plan – compliance with Maryland's lead laws in public school facilities. He stated that since the last meeting. A Regional Team member had participated in the Maryland Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) meeting and progress was beginning on implementation of facility manager training. He then reported on a second priority Action Plan – the marketing of MBEx, the Expressway and Regional Resources webpages. He concluded by reporting an update for an additional priority – the mechanical aviation training in collaboration with Southwest Airlines at Tipton Airport. Secretary Schulz added the importance of regional airports and the industries around them.

Ms. Gretchen Hardman, GOIA, Southern Maryland Team Leader presented the Action Plan for the fast tracking of growth related to the recently designated Mallow Bay National Marine Sanctuary. She stated there has been communication with Charles County staff and officials and all agree the first step is the formation of a Sanctuary Advisory Council by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Until this occurs, Ms. Hardman said the initiative is paused. Secretaries McCord and Haddaway-Riccio suggested engaging the local jurisdictions to encourage NOAA to form the Council.

Ms. Hardman also reported on a recently held grants workshop in Southern Maryland. She added that several constituent services issues were resolved among the Regional Team and the Harry W. Nice Bridge development package was recently announced which does not include a bike path.

Mr. Joe Griffiths reported for the Western Team. He stated the Action Plan for this Region is a renewable energy workforce development project. The Team is progressing by engaging Frostburg State University and Hagerstown Community College regarding the curriculum development and researching a potential U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant. Secretary McCord reported that Bill Atkinson of MDP who had served on the Appalachian Regional Council for many years has retired and has been replaced by David Cotton.

Mr. Griffiths then reported on behalf of the DC Metro Team and stated that the Action Plan is still under development. He added that the marketing of the new transportation project – the Purple Line as a connector of Universities, National Institutes of Health (NIH) and over 2 million square feet of commercial development is an excellent opportunity for collaboration among Agencies. He stated that MDP and DHCD have been working in Takoma Park assisting with planning and implementation particularly near the Purple Line. He added that JP Morgan Chase recently reported investing \$5 million to support affordable housing and small business assistance along the Purple Line corridor.

Discussion then occurred among the Subcabinet regarding the importance of engaging team members in the Regional Team input and marketing or promoting the Action Plans.

## **V. Good of the Order**

Secretary Schulz invited the Subcabinet to report Agency top priorities for the next year. Topics included modernization of licensing and reporting portals; prevailing wages; leadership development; one-stop grant system; feasibility study of underutilized properties in Western Maryland; public private partnerships; attraction of teachers and certificate and licensure positions through scholarships; importance and impact of the U.S. Census; I-270 Corridor Traffic Relief Plan; EDA grant for forestry; development of Fair Hill as a 5 star equestrian event; personal property tax collection; consolidation of assessments offices; brownfields workgroup activity; greenhouse gases; attraction of capital to opportunity zones; and entrepreneur, innovation and start-ups ecosystem. Secretary Schulz then requested that an opportunity zone program update be provided at the next Subcabinet meeting.

## **VI. Adjournment**

There being no further discussion and upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 12:58 pm.